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superfluous to point out, and which could only be attempted through great difficulty and privation; it was while reëntering upon this field of suffering that he died, as we have said.

The energy of modern English painters has led them into localities where certainly no artist had ever set down before, with the resolve of exactly representing extraordinary phases of Nature. We have already related what was accomplished by Holman Hunt and Thomas Seddon, in the deserts of Arabia and Syria, and now we have to refer to another difficulty conquered by John Brett at the foot of a glacier in Switzerland, by painting a most astonishingly elaborate picture of such a scene. In a valley between Alpine hills, lies the frozen sea, contorted into strange waves, whose fixed and various forms startle one with a general resemblance to those of the liquid ocean; breaking through these waters, which move only in the whole mass, are the rocks of the mountain side, the great boulders from which lie scattered on the unchanging ocean. The surface of these rocks is abraded and scaped into channels and fissures by the crush and creeping advance of the ice which neighbored upon their original position, so also are the hill-sides themselves, worn away by the advance of the irresistible conqueror. If you take up a magnifying glass (and without it half the picture's interest is overlooked) you can see, over the surface of the glaciers, the tumultuous waves of ice which hang behind one another far up into the valley. The astonishment which the aspect of the scene creates, is only equalled in the mind of the spectator, by that which moves him in conceiving the marvellous endurance, the unequalled patience, and most astounding fidelity which the painter had brought to the execution of the picture.

L. L.

SEA GRANDEURS.—There is a peculiar charm about the sea; it is always the same, yet never monotonous. Mr. Gosse has well observed, that you soon get tired of looking at the loveliest field, but never at the rolling waves. The secret, perhaps, is that the field does not *seem* alive; the sea is life-abounding. Profoundly mysterious as the field is, with its countless forms of life, the aspect does not irresistibly and at once coerce the mind to think of subjects so mysterious and so awful as the aspect of the sea does—it carries with it no ineradicable associations of terror and awe, such as are borne in every murmur of old ocean, and thus is neither so terrible nor so suggestive. As we look from the cliffs, every wave has its history; every swell keeps up suspense;—will it break now, or will it melt into that larger wave? And then the log which floats so aimlessly on its back, and now is carried under again, like a drowning wretch—it is the fragment of some ship which has struck miles and miles away, far from all help and all pity, unseen except of Heaven, and no messenger of its agony to earth except this log, which floats so buoyantly on the tide? We may weave some such tragic story, as we idly watch the fluctuating advance of the dark log; but whatever we weave, the story will not be wholly tragic, for the beauty and serenity of the scene are sure to assert their influences. O mighty and unfathomable sea! O terrible familiar! O grand and mysterious passion! In thy gentleness thou art terrible when sleep smiles on thy scarcely quiet-heaving breast; in thy wrath and thunder thou art beautiful! By the light of rising or of setting suns, in grey dawn or garish day, in twilight or in sullen storms of darkness, ever and everywhere beautiful; the poets have sung of thee, the painters have painted thee—but neither the song of the poet, nor the cunning of the painter's hand, has more than caught faint reflexes of thy incommunicable grandeur, and loveliness inexhaustible!—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

JOHN RUSKIN.

WHEN there is no living Art, there will be no criticism; no thorough exposition of the principles of Art. A wise man will not give his life to explore an influence that has died out, and is disregarded by his contemporaries. Whatever we may pretend, we cannot fully sympathize with the old masters. Many figures and characters in their works we thoroughly like—but we do not generally enjoy the company or activity to which they introduce us. We look coldly on flagellations and friars, on visions of prophets, on mortified ascetics, who have fled from activity to avoid sin; on saints and angels, whose labors and sufferings, joys and services are alike inconceivable to the modern mind. The Trinity and the Crucifixion, the Entombment, Resurrection, and Transfiguration are thoughts and symbols, not conceptions to us. They are not increased in value by representation, or what we call realization, as matters of history. We name the early Italian Art religious; but we do not go to it for our religion. Even Ruskin says, no pictures ever made any man better. Why then should we study pictures? Because the Art impulse is alive though they are dead; because it stirs in the student, and promises a work that will make men better. The old Art was a fountain of religious emotion when religion was all emotion. And a new Art may meet the want of our time, and express exactly what we all long to apprehend of the divine perfection of the universe.

When Art has died out into mere luxury, its theory dies also. In England no man for half a century had shown any understanding of true artistic aims. Villainous old masters were manufactured by thousands in Italy for the English market—the production of “Roba da Milordo” rubbish for the English nobleman, was an important branch of Italian industry. English criticism was a cant, and was carried on in set phrases. Men chattered of handling, of chiaroscuro, of tone, of the grand style, as if these were the mysteries of a priesthood, things remote and high, not to be understood or examined, miraculous endowments, lost with the last of the masters, not to be expected or sought again, but only adored in faith.

Haydon came among these mumblers, and demonstrated the superiority of living, ever present Nature and the greatness of the Greeks. He gave reasons and examples. He lectured on the Elgin marbles, with a living model by his side, and showed the noble intelligence of the ancients. But Haydon had only partial perception, and little creative power. He was insane in his devotion to “high Art,” by which he meant a vast extent of canvas displayed in public institutions. His extravagant melo-dramatic feeling offended the good sense of his countrymen, and he did not see that the public institution of England is a private home, which wealth and taste will adorn, and where the selected influences are associated. Englishmen really want small pictures of something with which they can sympathize. They like “the Duke” better than Alexander, and

Haydon's admiration for that modern hero saved him from entire evaporation into the "grand style."

True Art returned to England in the poetic practice of Wordsworth. With all his occasional dullness, and his inability to accept the industrial activity of the time, he represents Art, because he represents Nature. He turned from all conventions and previous reports, and gave himself singly to his own impression of life in this planet. With him came Coleridge, a man capable of taking the corn and leaving the chaff of literature, if not of theology. Immediately there sprung up a violent controversy among literary critics. As soon as poetry appeared after the long drouth that followed Milton, the theory of poetry began to be overhauled. When verses "fit to put round frosted cake" have become a standard, the advent of true poetry must overthrow all canons of criticism. The vivacious reviewers fought a long battle over the lake and the cockney heretics. A new view of poetry emerged not the largest, not final, but at least vital, and not formal. It was settled that poetry reflects life, communicates life, and is subject to all the laws of life, and to no other laws, and that nothing but Nature can be set up as a test and measure of its merit. People began to talk reasonably about poetry, to try it by their own experience and its application to private duties, efforts, and desires. It became meat and drink to every earnest seeker.

But the twaddle about Art continued. The academy was the church, and the priests of this old superstition offered no enlightenment to the vulgar, for, as Emerson says of another class, they themselves were "the vulgar." They were like every priestly class, the victims most deeply involved in darkness. Their cant, like that of all blind leaders of the blind, was the concentration of all cant. Nature put them out, and they inquired of one another, "Where do you put your brown tree?"

Then Turner appeared. A man of original perception and preference. He went his own way in study as well as practice, chose his own truth for presentation, and his own method of presenting it, and with great faults, such as great men always have, he made great statements, and the critics hooted at him as they had done at Wordsworth before. But in his works landscape Art had revived in England, and the theory of Art must undergo a revolution. Always in the world we have first the advent of genius, a new life, and then the attempt to give ourselves account of it to understand what has appeared. First, religion comes bodily among men. Then the theory of religion is evolved slowly by endless discussion of Christianity. So our old idea of landscape, founded on the limited success of the early masters, would not explain this new phenomenon, the method of Turner. He told new truths, and subordinated or neglected those we had established in the highest place.

In the battle that is sure to follow the appearance of a great poet, victory must go to the man who understands him. Turner will reach the general mind through the mediation of Ruskin, who stands and struggles among the

Art critics of the period a veritable champion of England. Amid these twaddlers he presents the formidable front of a man with a meaning, confident of his cause, and devoted to it with all his faculty. Like one of Cromwell's troopers, he brings heart and conscience to his work, which is a modern crusade, a medley of fighting, preaching, and poetry. Strong in conviction and feeling, he is fearless of tradition. Holding in his hand the standard of Nature and Truth, he has subjected the old ideals to searching examination, and he, at least, will "call a pop-gun a pop-gun, although the ancient and venerable of the earth pronounce it the crack of doom." He will justify his preference for Turner's work by reason, and find grounds for his admiration in the constitution of man, and the meaning of things. He makes Art moral by suspecting a right and wrong in it, philosophical by seeking in it an order coördinate with the mind of the maker and the structure of the world. He will bring back lawless imagination from the delirium of fancy and fantasy to reality and fact. He will give it freedom in subjection to natural laws, and establish its creations on a rock as stable and deep-seated as the foundations of the planet. He demands and expects honesty, sincerity, and certainty in Art, and in our enjoyment of it. He has reduced architecture to its elements, and written the first modern book on building which contains a principle. He stands sternly opposed to the sordid and pretentious habits of a trading age, and his very artistic criticism is an exercise not less of his moral than of his mental and æsthetic perceptions.

Only one or two men have written so wisely of the great organ of Art. In his chapter on Imagination penetrative he comes near declaring in simplicity that a spiritual light illumines the creative mind. He comes near perceiving with Swedenborg, that there is within each object a life of thought and love, from which its beauty radiates, and to which the seer enters in his vision. That soul or "properium," that essence and substance of each creature is fiery and vital, and in the grasp of one who has spiritual sight to apprehend it, will clothe itself with new and more transparent forms, so that the poet offers us in fables, parables, and pictures, a glimpse into the secret spirit of the universe, and opens a window in the breast of God. He has fallen but little short of the true doctrine of inspiration, which is a surrender of personal intelligence, and a reception of the wisdom which works over our heads and under our feet, and is always ready to enter to the mind of man, displacing his narrowness and fear from the centre of his consciousness, pronouncing benediction on all it has ordained. A man who believes in self-evident truth is not far from recognizing that the human mind rests upon and is for ever fed from the primal intelligence. Mr. Ruskin drops a little short of the purely spiritual view of Art, but his is the last ascending circle of materialism, and it is not too much to say that he has made the works of the great masters in painting and architecture to burn again with meaning and intelligence after so long eclipse.

The strong practical men had settled it that Art was a kind of babyism, a prettiness, or, like Plato's rhetoric, a species of cookery and flattery, and this man has already convinced them that it carries the deepest and most masculine perceptions of the race. We must be careful to acknowledge the power and influence of Mr. Ruskin, because he has but half accomplished the work he bravely undertook, because his faults as a writer and thinker are as conspicuous as his merits, and obscure his merits so that he already needs an interpreter. He does not rely entirely on the soul of Art, believing with Spenser, that "soul is form, and doth the body make." Therefore, the best theory leaves him behind, and the undisciplined reader is disgusted or bewildered by his paradox, his dogmatism, his cant and inconsistency. No sane man was ever fuller of weaknesses, extravagances, absurdities. His impetuosity overthrows him. He beats the air and explodes his strength, and yet having right and reason on his side, he mainly keeps his position against all odds and the treachery of his own constitution, which often fights against his principles.

His habitual employment of figures and phrases drawn from the Hebrew Scriptures, is a serious blemish of style. He talks of Babylon and Israel when we are looking at a cloud with him; of Jerusalem and the river Chebar, of Nadab and Abihu when his subject is a master or a mountain. He thrusts on us his opinion of French philosophy and German metaphysics, of ancient and modern poetry, of education in the middle ages, and worse than all, of Christianity in all ages. We are ready to hear him discourse of Art, and we find him laboring with us on the subject of human depravity. We know he has devoted fifteen years to the study of painting and architecture, and we cannot but suspect beforehand that in theology and philosophy he has much to learn. Even in his own department his judgments are often hasty, indiscriminate, sweeping, and crude; they are, of course, ill considered when they relate to matters quite out of his habitual range of thought.

If his advice or warning were kindly and cheerfully given, we could receive it with equal magnanimity; but he is very bitter in accusation of his brethren of mankind. The heat of his temperament, and a consciousness of exaggeration, keep him always in the attitude of a partisan or special pleader. His zeal and anxiety appear like distrust of his argument, and weaken his cause. He is never dispassionate, and he will put all his imaginary adversaries in the wrong, by imputing their preference to corruption. They are not more weak, he would have us believe, than wicked. Their taste is not so much undeveloped as depraved. He attacks a style of architecture as though every brick were cemented with sin. He traces back all artistic imperfection to an origin in some gigantic popular iniquity. Feeble color is the pallor and overcharged color, the rottenness of our degeneracy. We are wretches because we do not wear purple and velvet like the

old Venetians, or build with precious stones as they did. Modern sloth and pride, and self-consciousness, and hardness of heart, and shallowness divide his thought with the virtues of an earlier period, when virtue addressed itself more directly to the eye.

A man ought, indeed, to be impatient of the evil he sees in the world, but in exact proportion to his own purity of motive, he will be likely to recognize purity of motive in others. Good-will reveals the working of good-will in human intercourse. Reverence recognizes reverence under all disguises of form, and it is universally true that the best men see most nobleness in the efforts of their contemporaries, and take most sympathizing interest in all the enterprises and endeavor of their time. The minds of men have been diverted from old objects and methods of thought. They no longer care to clothe themselves in purple and scarlet, but wear black, and blue, and brown. It does not follow that they have lost their love of fair color through degradation of spirit. There is a noble moral element in that English plainness which refuses to paint itself, and has decided that black is of all colors most suitable for the apparel of "grave and stately gentlemen." And so all our disuse of old forms, in which the sense of beauty manifested itself. Our neglect of old pictures, of Gothic architecture, of Venetian marbles, and the mouldering splendor of early Christian Art in Europe, is only an indication that our æsthetic nature is satisfied elsewhere, and seeks appropriate manifestation not in reproduction of roses, and thorns, and grotesque animals in stone; not in building of churches or spires on the tops of private dwellings, but in works, it may be, invisible to the eye of the traveller. If we have no manly Art, perhaps we have something more manly than any Art, in which our perception and love of beauty is translated from the visible into the moral sphere. If, indeed, there is in our age a diversion of thought from visible beauty, it may as likely be withdrawn toward the better as the baser part of our complex nature. Perhaps charity and justice fill the mind while festivity is forgotten. There was never more evidence than we see to-day of that great moral tendency, which is the true human nature. There was never more manifest love of man for man, more helpfulness, more aspiration toward a better state of society, toward

"The nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws."

If we neglect old beauty it is because we seek a new, a deeper, and more comprehensive beauty, and the mind will not be dragged back from its seeking to regard with reverence the product of a thought, and desire no longer living in the world. The human mind works and looks forward. Goodness and beauty are always deserting old forms. The true prophet of our own or any era will not be a Jeremiah mourning over its healthy indifference to the past. He will detect the vital element in its mixed motive, will recognize the moral and æsthetic instincts always working,

making new channels, while they abandon the old. Perhaps a newspaper, or a lecture, or a chapter of Mr. Ruskin's last volume may feed the same sense which used to be nourished by an expressive architecture, and the decoration of churches with frescoes and gems. Disgust and impatience with human activity, in any period, is a token of inability to understand the effort of the period, and the authority of Mr. Ruskin is weakened by his discontent.

A little more sympathy and largeness of nature would sooner have delivered him from this ignorant contempt for his kind, which is one of the diseases of our later childhood, a very subtle form, a bitter or misanthropic species of sentimentalism, growing out of an irritable moral sense. He simply overvalues his own emotions, and thinks they are private and peculiar, not universal. As men commonly illustrate the vices which they attack, he furnishes a remarkable example of that subjective habit, for which he will not take a name from the Germans, who first detected and described it. This habit he condemns in a single one of its many manifestations as the pathetic fallacy. It is a preoccupation with one's own personal experience which magnifies its importance, and makes it seem worthy to color the very sun and moon in the sky. Call it a subjective or personal habit, or a pathetic fallacy or sentimentalism, it is the same thing in its root. There is self-complacency lurking under it. Byron's misanthropy was a very transparent expression of his own self-estimate; and the astringency of our critic-preacher just as clearly betrays the value he puts on his perception. He shares in his manhood the weakness of growing boys, who feel poetic instincts stirring in their blood, and fancy they are separated by these motions from the experience of their fellows.

Clearly Mr. Ruskin's strength does not lie in controversy. He does not convince and secure confidence as he goes along. He appeared at first beside Turner as a poet and reformer, revolting against dogmatism, against rules and maxims, æsthetic cant and convention. He knows and sometimes declares that genius can employ all methods and materials to show its meaning and delight. He knows that the spirit and feeling of the artist shine abroad through his work and make its value, which does not depend on any accuracy of imitation, on any fidelity in details, but on suggestion of natural qualities and manifestation of supernatural. And yet he is chiefly occupied with means and methods, is studious of treatment, discusses the right and the wrong practice, and finally settles down into a drawing master, and will teach the young people how to imitate the objects which they see. He forbids us to use outline because outline is false—but so is all our representation. We know that outline in Nature is only a termination of one plane by another, of one color by another, and yet that termination, because it defines form and because attention fastens on it, is as much emphasized in our view of natural objects as it is in the

outline drawing. The outline may be false to Nature, yet true to our perception and impression of Nature. Grant that it is an insufficient means of representing the figure, it will suggest action and present character. It is only imperfect as all our methods are imperfect, but not bad or unworthy to be employed.

In this case, and in many another, Mr. Ruskin delivers us from his dogma by his extravagance. There is no danger that artists will disuse outline where it answers their purpose, or that young readers will "cast Coleridge at once aside as sickly and useless, and Shelley as shallow and verbose," and "keep to" the authors he commends. No man will abstain from writing poetry because "there is, perhaps, rather too much than too little in the world already." Shall we cease to live, and think, and act poetry because so many men have been poets? Is there, then, a great, sufficient, prophetic, and final poem in the world? Have Æschylus and Homer, Dante and Shakspeare shown us the society that is to be? Poetry looks forward, not back, and for it the true history of man is yet unwritten, as his true life is yet unlivid. Moreover, Mr. Ruskin was not wiping his pen when he gave that piece of advice, but sharpening it, as all book-makers do while they undervalue the influence of books. Ruskin's own prose poems, his pictures of pictures, and of the phenomena of Nature, will antidote this singular prescription. He will not persuade us to burn our engravings or repudiate our debt of gratitude to those laborious, pains-taking, faithful men, by whose mediation the pictures of Raphael are familiar in all their moral purpose, in all their soul and essence to many an untravelled student in this western wilderness. He will not persuade us that "Domenichino is incapable of doing anything good, great, or right in any field, way, or kind whatsoever," because one of his misnamed religious pictures is blasphemous. Rank with this judgment his recommendation to look with trust in their being always right, to "Titian, Veronese, Giorgione, John Bellini, and Velasquez," his argument against the possibility of employing iron in architecture, because he does not find that iron building is ever alluded to "in the Bible as likely to become familiar to the minds of men." He thrusts upon us many another whim, commended by his manifest earnestness, and the elegance and scriptural fervor of his diction, till we become confused and unable to disentangle ourselves at once from the web of sentiment and sophistry, which he has woven around his own mind. The danger is that a plain and sincere reader may reject him altogether as a guide unworthy to be trusted. To such skeptics we say, do not go to Ruskin for guidance, but for stimulus and inspiration.

It is strange to see this born poet following afar off in the footsteps of those who teach picture making by rule and contrivance. He says, indeed, that no good work can be done under such direction, yet he offers certain laws of composition able to "assist in setting forth what good is in your works." He finds an expression of repose and unity

in Turner's picture of the bridge at Coblenz, and attributes it to a repetition of forms, the introduction of a large tower and a small tower, a large boat and a little boat, a tall mast and a short mast, a great promontory and a corresponding smaller bank. The spires of Coblenz are made to repeat this "echo" by playing them about "till they come right," without regard to their arrangement in Nature.

This is the old conventional composition of the English school in a new form. It ought to be added by way of appendix to a new addition of that valuable practical treatise on the picturesque, which directs the pupil to lay in a mass of shadow always wedge-shaped, and occupying three-fifths of his canvas; to introduce every important object not in the middle of the picture, but on one side; to group his figures in pyramidal form, and be careful to give a certain moderate obliquity to the trunk of the brown tree.

If these rules will not help the pupil to compose, neither will they enable him to understand good composition. Repose and unity are spiritual qualities, universal in Nature because one law and spirit underlies all objects, and shines everywhere. They are revealed to repose and integrity of spirit in the beholder, and their indications are subtle and various, not coarse and palpable to be seized and set forth in a formula. He who sympathizes with Nature's harmony will discover and emphasize those delicate traits in which the spirit of a scene is manifested. A man who is not at one with himself may fill his landscape with repetitions with Turnerian "echoes" and yet he will never express the repose which he has not enjoyed. He does not bring to Nature the life to which her secrets are disclosed, and, therefore, he cannot detect the ever-varying methods by which in each new composition of her own she satisfies our longing for completeness and sufficiency.

These new laws of composition will be mischievous even with the caution which accompanies them, because our first and last effort in teaching children to draw, must be as Ruskin admits "to get rid of systematic rules altogether," and refer the pupil to his own native perception and sense of beauty. With or without genius, only that work is honest and respectable which shows the original impression of Nature upon the eye and mind of her admirer. The best law is bad if imposed from abroad, and received from authority and principles so narrow as these of "repetition," of "continuity," of "curvature" will impede every student who allows himself to be influenced by them. Let the pupil endeavor to express what Nature expresses to himself, and by her methods, as he recognizes them in the scene before him, and he will be safe from the formalism of all "principles of composition."

Mr. Ruskin is accused of frequent self-contradiction, and in reply to the common complaint he blames the stupidity of the public. Undervaluing as usual the perceptions of mankind, he says, "There are few people in the world who are capable of seeing the two sides of a subject, or of con-

ceiving how the statements of its opposite aspects can possibly be reconcilable." It would be more just to say there are few people in the world who do not see two sides to every subject as separate and irreconcilable, and the business of a superior thinker is to show that they are two sides of one fact, that they do not oppose themselves except as different views of the same object. If Mr. Ruskin makes contradictory statements, and leaves them unreconciled, if he does not furnish the connecting principle, and bring his opposites under the law, he gives us no help. The world is full of truths which seem to conflict. Thought shows that a larger truth underlies these antagonists, and makes a deeper harmony by means of their opposition. In Art those men who use a little more detail, and those who use a little less, are contending as though there were essential opposition between them. He would do good service who could show that the Post and the Pre-Raphaelites are seeking one end by different means. Our benefactor is always a reconciler, showing not how many sides there are to a question, but how all our perceptions may be united into comprehensive consistency. Generalization is essential to Art. There can be no expression without it. Art is expression, because it does not take up all the facts of Nature, but extracts the juice of every scene and event to show its quality. The Pre-Raphaelite must make an abstract, and often say tree when he cannot tell us what kind of tree he means. Yet men wrangle about generalization. The thinker should clear up this entire subject, and bring the wranglers all to one point, so that the statements of both parties would no longer seem contradictory, but only partial. This union of partial truths into whole truths is the office of thought.

Mr. Ruskin is a bad theorizer, because he does not resolve our difficulties and reconcile our perceptions. If his mind were deep and clear he would show the "opposite aspects" of a subject without appearance of inconsistency. For Art, like every other subject, has two sides, and only two. Corresponding to these we have in the world two views, that of the materialist and that of his old adversary the spiritualist. There is the man who relies on methods of expression, and that other man who relies entirely on what is to be expressed. The spiritualist offers no system of rhetoric, or logic, or grammar. He will not tell how to speak; but what is worth saying. He knows that if a man has central truth he will find forms, find letters, syllables, words, and sentences sufficient for his purpose, and if they serve his purpose, they are sufficient for all mankind as a key to his perception. Such a man will never be betrayed into setting up truth of imitation as a standard of excellence in Art. The essential contradiction of Ruskin lies in his occasional tendency to look for the sources of power in mere exterior truthfulness in accuracy of representative form. If he were not intuitively and deeply an idealist, as, indeed, every man is, this contradiction would not appear. He says distinctly that the essence of composition is unteachable, yet he goes on to give certain

laws of composition to assist his pupils. In this inconsistency all the self-contradiction not only of Mr. Ruskin but of every partial thinker is involved. We need to be rid forever of the formulists, the rhetoricians, logicians, and grammarians of Art. We must advise the pupil. Say what you feel, show what you see, without a thought of precedent. The Art impulse is palsied by a theory. Perfect freedom is the gift and necessity of the Muse. Shakspeare kills out the drama as a great tree kills down the bushes and grass. The old masters rule and ride the academies. With their example before him, and the din of cognoscenti in his ears, a student examines and distrusts every natural liking, all his own inclination. In Art the speculative intellect must take a secondary place. It must become an instrument of feeling, of desire and loving preference. A creed is as fatal to Art as to vital religion. It is the delight and involuntary choice of the student that must guide him, not any dry perception, above all, not any theory of beauty or expression. We feel that if there were poetry enough of the Ruskinian kind in Claude's pictures to engage the enthusiasm of the critic, he would and could easily justify the bad tree drawing of Claude as a noble negligence of trifles and devotion to greater truth. For Turner's excellence is not universal. He also is negligent in many particulars, unintelligible in many; but his great feeling, his sincere love of the truth, he does tell; his noble intelligence, and true intentional choice make his work a poetic satisfaction to those who understand it, and recommend even his faults. Ruskin can justify the painting of a rainbow and a sun on the same side of the heavens, if only the painter serves a great truth by this great falsehood. We never afterwards rely on his criticism of details in execution. We say something in the spirit of a work has made him delighted or disgusted with the method of the artist. His reasoning is somewhat like this. "Here is a noble thinker. Then all his work must be noble," and he defends it all. Titian's sacrifice to color is good, because grandly intended. So is many another subordination of important qualities if it be boldly undertaken with a purpose. It is never safe to say what exterior imperfection we will and what we will not pardon in the artist. If he is full of feeling he will compel us to say as Ruskin himself says of Frere's picture, "if this painting be imperfect, I have never seen perfect painting do so much." Let us fall back at once on the meaning and feeling of the man. If that be worthy and accessible through his execution we shall accept his method whatever it may be. Mr. Ruskin may be sure that a grand man will show all his quality, and move our sympathy and admiration, even though he may even use outlines alone, as a poet remains a poet, though he may choose to write in prose and not in verse.

The great masters—Durer, Titian, Angelo, Raphael, magnetized men by their own intensity of feeling, and their works, full of imperfection, command admiration by the quality of manhood revealed in them. We value neither the Paradise Lost, nor the Divina Commedia as fair repre-

sentatives of Milton and Dante. We value the majesty of these men which appears in spite of the artistic insufficiency of their poems, and cannot be hidden by the weakness of their design. We dare not criticise Raphael and Angelo as we do other men, because in touching their faults we do not reach these men. Behind the picture, shining through its obscurity, is an intelligence which we labor all our lives to apprehend. We do not care to criticise what we do not wholly comprehend. This awe and reverence is good if not carried to excess. Turner has awakened it in Ruskin, and a great artist will be sure to cast it on all who are able to meet his meaning, although the work in which it shows itself may be crude like the tin figures of Giotto, or barbaric like the Moses of Angelo. There may be great expression therefore, great power and influence, great command of human affections, with or without fidelity of imitation. Of course a work is weakened by all departure from Nature, yet it may have strength to cover that weakness as the merit of Turner covers all his extravagance, and converts his very faults into beauties for his enthusiastic admirer.

Let us say boldly that all excellence in Art depends on spiritual qualities. There can hardly be a "healthy demand in London" or elsewhere "for pictures which mean nothing, just as there is for strawberries and asparagus." One might as reasonably talk of a proper and healthy demand for wooden strawberries and asparagus. If a picture means nothing, it is far enough beneath criticism. If it has meaning we shall find it universally true as Ruskin says of Frere's "Prayer," that "only the man who can conceive" the work "knows how he ought to paint it." In landscape, as well as figure painting, the soul of Nature is to be regarded, not the surface. Our critic has shown his perception of spiritual things in nature. His elaborate treatise on typical beauty shows how nearly he has reached the secret of our delight in landscape. The spirit of the Universe looks kindly on us from Nature as well as from the eyes of man. Yet, when spiritual qualities are to be sought to give excellence to our drawings, Ruskin permits us to study the "echoes" of Turner, and refers his expression of Repose to a repetition of forms. So, again, when he treats of imagination associative, the power of combining "two ideas which are separately wrong, which together shall be right," he says "this operation of mind, so far as I can see, is absolutely inexplicable," and he makes no effort to show us the nature of the copula between the two ideas, and leaves an impression that the chemistry on which this election depends is in the mind of the artist alone. This miracle, like every other, is, indeed, beyond the control of the will; it is beyond what we call explanation; but the secret of it is open. A spiritual perception or emotion chooses with fatal accuracy its own instruments and expresses itself. By his moral relation to the landscape, by being *en rapport* with that which looks through it, a man is led to notice, to value, and reproduce every trait which is luminous with that spirit. So, by sympathy

with his subject, the portrait painter reads every form in a face, and determines which line is accidental and which is representative of the life within. Our choice is obedience to Nature's choice, for she emphasizes in every scene a few features, and subordinates the rest. The artist knows among all the impressions made on the human eye, how many go deeper and strike the soul. He reproduces these. The layman's soul is in his eye. The eye of the artist is in his soul. Therefore, this canon of criticism is perfect—so much soul, so much excellence in Art.

Ruskin's own discourse is valuable with all its faults, because his whole nature has gone into it. It is itself in every better example a genuine work of Art. He is inspired by Nature and by the masters of painting, and he describes scenes and pictures in words which themselves are pictures. As a critic, he is at war with himself, because he has not courage to cut loose from all consideration of methods, and look singly at the thing signified. As a poet he has drawn all eyes toward the painter and the architect. He has convinced our skeptical dilettanti that the old men were in earnest in their building, carving, and coloring. The earnestness with which they inspire this pupil is a proof of it. Ruskin is the poet of old Art. With bitterness, almost with despair, he celebrates its nobleness, and exposes the meanness of those trifles which have usurped its place in human regard. He has done good service in examining the title by which Claude and Salvator, Domenichino and Poussin have ruled the dull imagination of modern artistic England. His very criticism is creative. It is the illustration of a great demand laid upon Art. It is the erection of a new ideal—a bridge laid between spirit and form. His studies of clouds and mountains show a reverence before nature which is contagious, like all poetic enthusiasm. It catches and kindles in the reader and sends him studious and expectant into the woods and fields. We must regret that this self-confident Englishman has poured out with his poetry all the petulance and impatience which are said to belong to the *genus irritabile vatum*, to balance their gift from the gods, and mingle bitterness in their cup of life that would otherwise flow with honey. He is prolix and tedious, because he has no confidence in the perception of mankind. He is always a little wrong when he is most right, from doggedness of resistance to all the stupidity which appears to him standing ready to cavil, incapable of generous reception. He is the Don Quixote of Art, always running a tilt at some windmill, some imaginary heresy, artistic, social, or moral. He is constantly battering at some prejudice, sophistry, or fallacy, which seems for him to cover the earth and hide the sky, while his readers see in it only a giant of straw, a figment of the bilious temperament of the critic. And yet this disputant is one of the seers of his time in England, born to discover and disclose a beauty yet unembodied in Art, and no man not an artist has ever rendered such service to Art. Indeed, in his best moments, he is an artist, and is lifted to fullness of delight in presence of Nature or of the report wise men

have made of her influence. His temperament chokes the stream of his genius. He is often unhappy and personal, not free and delivered in joy, as pure genius always is to the beauty which made, which rules and floods the world, and yet the poetic element breaks out through all his discourse. Though an unreliable guide, he is the most stimulating companion, because in spite of all his melancholy views of actual life the great unquenchable faith of the poet burns in him.

To the young reader, or one unlearned in Art, we say place no confidence in the dictum of Mr. Ruskin; distrust his statements and estimates. Do not even think of him as a critic. He has not the judicial temperament, the consideration and fairness which fit a man to sit in judgment on the efforts of his fellows. Suspect and scrutinize his application of principles, accept the principles themselves generally, not strictly, as approximations and hints, not laws. With this caution you may yield yourselves to enjoy the earnestness and vitality of this thinker, to share his love of Truth, strong even when he is led into error, his enjoyment of all noble activity, his admiration for true manhood, and his abhorrence of sordid aims. Share his reverence before Nature and before the men of reverence, his sense of a divine element in landscape and in life. You will think better of human nature when you see how much nobleness lies under the very weakness of this impetuous lover of the right. In every age the world is enriched by a man who can maintain that the entire excellence of Art is Truth, that Nature is the standard, and fidelity the measure of Merit.

We must not forget the debt we owe to Mr. Ruskin, or retort upon him anything like his own injustice to mankind. He may yet greatly increase our obligation. He seems already beginning to take a larger view of Beauty, to see that she is ever living, active, and universal in nature and in man, mingling with our love of use, of right, and order, always working to some good result more manifest in the development of the British Constitution than in all the spires of Gothic architecture, the stones of Venice, or the glories of the Vatican. There is a higher beauty than that of Art or of lonely nature in a world of living, aspiring, helpful men and women, all secretly lovers of the best, all leaning and struggling toward such an ideal as they can see. Good Art will address itself to the public perception and desire, as old Art did in its day. In England it will speak English, not Italian or Greek, or Hebrew. Turner was a humorist, who partly hid and partly declared his love for Nature, who covered a delicate perception under a coarse exterior, careless of recognition, singing to himself to please himself, disdainful of his audience. Such an artist needs his interpreter. But a man devoted to all truth and to the good of his fellows, unwilling to obscure any light, will want neither explanation nor defence. The children read Wordsworth with delight, and were already reading him, while critics scoffed at his verses. The old Art is too far removed from us to take strong hold on any

mind. It was good when it was intelligible, and addressed itself to popular sympathy. By continual study of it and of the past we might go back so far as to understand and appreciate its former value; but we cannot withdraw so much strength from seeking a better future. Art must be prophecy, not history. We do not believe, neither does Mr. Ruskin feel in his happy hours, that no picture ever made any man better. The picture that makes us greatly better will show what we may ourselves, in the body, become and do. The supreme beauty is hidden under our longing and striving. He who can see and show it will remind no man of Durer, or Titian, or Angelo. He will conquer academies and conventions as poor Haydon could not do, by substituting a real for a feigned, an involuntary for an artificial delight. Good poetry and good painting will make their own way, will reach all open hearts without need of comment, explanation, allowance, and defence. Half Art needs an expositor to open its meaning not well revealed. So ancient Art is a sealed book to all but the learned; that of the Greeks because we do not know the nude figure; that of the Italians because we do not worship the Virgin and the saints. But if any painter shall appear who can take up the ideality of our own age, and show that new society for which we are longing and laboring, there will need no treatise to call to his work the intelligent attention of mankind.

BROWNLEE BROWN.

SWINGING IN THE BARN.

Swing away,
From the great cross-beam,—
Through the scented clover-hay,
Sweet as any dream!

Higher yet!
Up, between the eaves,
Where the grey doves cooing flit
'Twixt the sun-gilt leaves.

Here we go!
Whistle, merry wind!
'Tis a long day you must blow
Lighter hearts to find.

Swing away!
Sweep the rough barn floor!
While we gaze on Acready
Framed in by the door.

One, two, three!
Quick, the round red sun,
Hid behind you twisted tree,
Means to end the fun.

Swing away!
Over husks and grain!
Shall we ever be as gay
If we swing again?

LUOT LAROOM.

HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION IN ENGLAND.*

If the author of this book has failed to give us a history of civilization, it is due to his mental deficiencies, and not to those of his acquirements. Men of patience, of opportunities, and of literary curiosity, can write books of erudition, whose marginal references may astonish the ignorant, and attract a certain class of wondering readers, but if they are without an inborn organic constructive power, their labors degenerate into the broken up and purposeless materials of history, and are void of the first requisites of a work of Art. A man's possessions, of whatever kind they may be, are valuable to the world only in proportion to his capacity to make the right use of them. This age is as remarkable for its feverish ambition to accumulate as it is sadly deficient in its constructive power; there seems to be little or no space between a mad desire to possess and an equally mad desire to squander. Mr. Buckle himself is a literary exemplification of this great epidemic of the times, and has but little modesty in making an ostentatious display of his wealth. If he, however, were to separate scrupulously that which really belongs to himself from that which justly belongs to others, he would become much poorer, and others much richer. Few men that become rich through others' treasures are very wise or generous in the use of them.

Mr. Buckle has given us kaleidoscopic views of certain great facts in the history of the world's civilization, but no history of civilization itself, for the simple reason that his mental organization is utterly inferior to such a sublime undertaking. Throughout the eight hundred and fifty-four pages of his introductory volume he has been unable to form even a skeleton conception of what the history of civilization is or ought to be. The moment he attempts the discussion of principles apart from their concrete counterparts in the common-place facts of the world, he is not only confused and muddy, but even egregiously wrong and childishly foolish. Had his mental forces allowed him to think for five years out of the thirty he may have read, his work would either have assumed a shape to suit his subject, or would never have been undertaken. We have read the whole of his volume without having had a ray of new light cast upon the past, the present, or the future: he has, on the contrary, entangled many of the important constituents of civilization with the dark confusion of his own mind. He is not only incapable of mastering his subject, but is mastered by it to such an extent as to have his whole mental machinery broken up and thrown into chaos.

No architect would attempt to erect a building with one brick; but the logical blunder of writing the history of civilization *nationally* is not too great for Mr. Buckle. In this blunder he has not the credit of originality. Dr. Tiedemann has preceded him in this line, and varies from

* "History of Civilization in England." By Henry Thomas Buckle. Vol. I, pp. 854. London: John W. Parker & Son. 1857.